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SUBJECT: MOROCCO: ANNUAL TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REPORT

REFS: (A) 06 STATE 00202745

¶1. (U) Sensitive but unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

¶2. (U) This cable responds to action request (ref A) for updated information on the Moroccan government's efforts to combat trafficking in persons from April 2006 to March ¶2007.

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Morocco Remains on the Right Path  
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¶3. (SBU) Over the past year, the GOM continued to prioritize its law enforcement activities intended to investigate, prosecute, and deter what the GOM describes as "human-trafficking rings." Over the past year Morocco continued its strategy to fight trafficking based on five major pillars: security measures, legislation, the creation of institutions specializing in fighting illegal migration, international cooperation, and public awareness campaigns.

It should be underlined, however, that the GOM makes no distinction between migrant smuggling and human trafficking. The GOM understands both activities as illegal and exploitative, which often result in the abuse and even the demise of Moroccans and third country nationals who seek to emigrate clandestinely. With apparent GOM encouragement, Moroccan civil society was increasingly and visibly active on TIP issues.

¶4. (U) Morocco's geographic position as a natural conduit for sub-Saharan trafficking continues to be addressed by Morocco and the European Union (EU). Despite efforts made by both Spain and Morocco to stem trafficking and illegal migration in the past few years, the problem persists. Throughout the year, the two countries reaffirmed their commitment to stemming the flow of illegal migrants across the border in the north, as well as in the waterways between Morocco and the Canary Islands.

¶5. (SBU) Moroccan officials continued to assert that the Polisario orchestrated the illicit transfer of migrants through the Western Sahara and northern Mauritania to the Canary Islands. UN officials in the Western Sahara, however, claimed they saw no evidence of Polisario involvement in migrant smuggling in any organized or sanctioned way.

¶6. (SBU) Morocco continues to work closely with the Spanish Government on resolving the issue of the 4500-6000 Moroccan minors living illegally in Spain. The Spanish

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Government will not repatriate minors until they are sure the young Moroccans have a safe and healthy environment available in Morocco. In 2006 Spain pledged funds for two rehabilitation centers, one in the Tangier area and one in Marrakech. The facilities, which will assist in the minors' reinsertion into Moroccan society, will be shelters where the children can receive counseling, health care, remedial education, and job training before being reunited with their families or placed in regular schools.

¶7. (U) Overview of Morocco's activities to combat trafficking in persons and migrant smuggling.

--A. Morocco is a country of origin and destination for domestic trafficking, generally involving young rural girls recruited to work as child maids in urban areas. It is also a popular country of transit for internationally trafficked men, women, and children. It is a country of origin for men, women, and minors trafficked to European countries and to a lesser extent the Middle East. According to the Government of Morocco, international organizations, and numerous nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the number of Moroccan minors being trafficked and smuggled into Spain, Italy, and other European countries, increased in ¶2006. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) is working with the governments of Morocco and Italy, and Moroccan NGOs to develop a plan of action to stop the trafficking of minors. The first phase of this cooperative plan will be a survey to measure the magnitude of the problem. In addition, the survey will identify the most vulnerable persons, pinpoint the regions from which persons are trafficked, and propose the most effective methods of prevention.

According to a spokesman from the Ministry of the Interior (MOI), the number of illegal migration attempts from Morocco to Europe plummeted by 62 percent in 2006. He also claimed that Morocco successfully and humanely repatriated over 7100 sub-Saharan migrants. The MOI also claimed that more than 350 trafficking networks were dismantled in 2006.

--B. Domestic trafficking in Morocco has historically involved three vulnerable groups as victims: (a) girls sent involuntarily to serve as child maids, (b) girls offered as

child brides, and (c) women forced to perform sexual services. There have been several instances where Moroccan women were unknowingly trafficked to Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Cyprus, and Syria to become sex workers after being promised jobs as domestics. It appears that the majority of the girls and young women pressed into domestic servitude and sexual tourism are from isolated rural villages in the Middle and High Atlas Mountains. Human

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rights advocates charge that "intermediaries" approach poor parents promising that their daughters will have a chance at a better life as child brides or child maids.

Sub-Saharan Africans transiting Morocco, destined for Europe, also fall victim to traffickers. According to Dr. Javier Gabaldon, the General and Medical Coordinator for the Moroccan office of Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF), the majority of female clandestine sub-Saharan migrants with whom he came into contact while providing medical care and humanitarian assistance, were pressured into prostitution and involuntary servitude to pay for food and shelter by their "handlers," whether Nigerian, Moroccan, Algerian, or Spanish. These claims were reinforced by officials at UNHCR in Rabat who worked directly with refugees and asylum seekers from sub-Saharan countries.

As a country of origin Morocco's rural and urban poor are a ready pool for traffickers and migrant smugglers, who promise a better life to their recruits. Thus, most internal trafficking of persons occurs in Morocco from rural poor areas to the cities. According to UNICEF and local NGO social welfare advocates, traffickers or "intermediaries" habitually visit isolated rural villages in the Atlas Mountains where they persuade desperate parents that their daughters would be better off as child brides or child maids. Similarly, these intermediaries serve as the go-between to find employment for adolescent boys. In rare instances, these youngsters and teenagers have ended up as sex workers in popular Moroccan tourist destinations, namely Marrakech, Agadir, and Fez.

Political will exists at the highest levels of government to combat trafficking in persons. Morocco recognizes its problems with trafficking as a transit country and country of origin. The GOM has asked both the U.S. and the EU for assistance with border challenges and repatriation issues. Morocco continues to participate in regional and international conferences focusing on how to counter trafficking and human smuggling. Morocco fully supports civil society's efforts to fight human trafficking and smuggling.

--C. Foreign economic migrants have increasingly sought to enter Europe through the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla or cross from Laayoune (Western Sahara) or Tan-Tan to the Canary Islands. In 2005 and 2006, however, there was a shift in the preferred path of migration through the Western Sahara to further south towards Mauritania. While most of the migrants come from sub-Saharan Africa, it is becoming increasingly common to find Asians from India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan attempting the journey.

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According to official Moroccan press, more than 300 illegal Asian migrants were arrested in the first nine months of 2006. The GOM and several local and international NGOs estimated that approximately 10,000 illegal sub-Saharan clandestine migrants were in Morocco awaiting an opportunity to slip into European territory. There has also been speculation that another 20,000 are poised at the Algerian boarder waiting to enter Morocco.

While the GOM continues its efforts to fight trafficking,

the cost is a hardship. The GOM has continuously requested help from the EU and individual countries. In August, the EU announced a USD 86 million grant to help implement a migration emergency program. The project will strengthen Morocco's ability to manage the migration flow, fight illegal migration, reinforce border control, improve Morocco's legal framework, boost border security and enhance criminal investigation capacities.

Incidents of migrant smuggling, which is rampant in Morocco, are most often treated as trafficking in persons. Thus, the proportion of these persons being trafficked remains open to question since GOM figures do not differentiate among those who are trafficked from the vast majority who are voluntary economic migrants.

The number of Moroccan women compelled to perform sexual services remains difficult to determine as this sort of activity is culturally unacceptable and is not exclusive to large urban centers where NGOs are more active in monitoring and confronting such problems. Many of these women initially resort to prostitution because of dire economic circumstances and it remains difficult to differentiate between those who have been forced or coerced by others into such behavior and those who have voluntarily opted for prostitution as a means of economic support.

Morocco is generally not a destination for trafficked victims from outside the country. However, according to senior GOM officials and local NGO leaders, numerous destitute female Nigerian migrants found living illegally in northeastern Morocco were forced to prostitute themselves in return for protection, food, and shelter.

#### 18. (U) Prevention efforts.

--A. The government acknowledges that trafficking and migrant smuggling are problems. The GOM does not differentiate between illegal migration and trafficking.

--B. In November 2003, in response to a royal edict issued by King Mohamed VI, the GOM established an overarching

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agency for migration matters, the National Agency for Migration and Border Surveillance. This agency reports to both the Palace and the MOI. Within the MOI, the Director General of Internal Affairs, Director of International Cooperation, and Chief of Immigration are responsible for directing policy. Within the Office of the Prime Minister, there is a secretariat for migration matters. Other responsible parties include the police, gendarmes, and border patrol of the MOI, the Ministry of Defense (the army and navy), the Ministry of Social Development, Family, and Solidarity, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of National Education, the Delegated Ministry in charge of Moroccans Living Abroad, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Consular and Social Affairs Office, and the Customs Service.

On a routine basis, officials of the Labor Department, which has an Office of Children's Affairs dedicated to reducing child labor, meet with ILO-IPEC and UNICEF representatives to harmonize policy and establish programs designed to combat child labor and the exploitation of children, notably those working as child maids or junior artisans.

--C. In January, the GOM, working closely with local and international NGOs, initiated a public awareness campaign to educate Moroccans about the evils of employing child maids. The campaign is the first part of the GOM's new Plan of Action to fight child labor and domestic trafficking of children. The program, Inqad, is aimed at ending the culture of employing child maids through education. The awareness campaign uses TV, radio,

brochures, and the national press to spread the message.

--D. The second part of the Plan of Action, child protection units, began last year. Five pilot units, in Casablanca, Fes, Marrakech, Tangier, and Laayoune offered street children counseling, legal guidance, psychological support, and promoted children's rights.

In conjunction with USDOL, ILAB-IPEC, UNICEF, and the governments of various EU countries, Morocco has a number of programs underway designed to keep and/or return children to school. These include the USDOL-funded "ADROS" program aiding underage children in the labor market and a USDOL ILO-IPEC program benefiting rural working children.

In addition to the campaigns listed above, the IOM currently has several projects underway and in the planning stages. The IOM has nearly completed a social and educational center in Tetouan aimed at children, the population's most vulnerable to trafficking. IOM is also

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currently developing a plan to assist and educate children and minors at-risk of being trafficked or lured into clandestine migration. The IOM, GOM, and the government of Italy began development on a similar joint project in central Morocco in 2006.

--E. The GOM relies heavily on NGOs, other relevant organizations, and civil society to address the issue of trafficking. The GOM has established excellent relations with these organizations.

--F. The GOM does not differentiate between trafficking and illegal migration; therefore, it does not monitor for evidence of trafficking specifically. Morocco has noticeably increased the number of domestic security forces on its northeast border with Algeria and along its far southwest Atlantic border, including the disputed Western Sahara territory, facing the Canary Islands to interdict trafficking and migrant smuggling. It has also stepped up enforcement in Tangier and at airports, train stations, and shipping ports. The GOM has a substantial and well-organized immigration, customs, and security apparatus that closely monitors the country's borders. Border patrol officers routinely find clandestine migrants hidden in trucks and freighters destined for Spain. In August 2006, police in the Spanish enclave of Ceuta in northern Morocco arrested nearly 400 Moroccan would be migrants hidden inside fairground rides destined for mainland Spain.

Unfortunately, a rugged northern coastline, which is difficult to patrol, and the close proximity to Europe over the narrow Strait of Gibraltar, make it possible for small boats to transport illegal migrants to Spain without detection. Last year, there were more reports of traffickers and smugglers using powerful jet skis to move people from Moroccan territory to the beaches of Ceuta. Moroccan authorities also cite difficulty in monitoring the long border with Algeria, over which clandestine sub-Saharan migrants transit into Morocco, especially as the GOM claims Algerian authorities make little effort to stem the flow of migrants or to cooperate.

--G. The GOM established two interagency coordinating bodies, the "National Observatory of Migration," which serves as an "anti-trafficking in persons task force" authorized to formulate policy, and the "National Agency for Migration and Border Surveillance," which conducts investigations and make arrests.

The Office of the Prime Minister's Secretariat for Immigration Affairs serves as the coordinating office for agencies concerned with migration and illegal immigration.

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Anti-trafficking activities are primarily carried out by the Interior Ministry, although it involves different entities falling under it: clandestine immigration is the purview of immigration officials; prostitution falls under the police; while child brides are under the purview of local authorities who ultimately report to the Interior Ministry. Three departments are chiefly responsible for child labor issues: the Ministry of Employment and Professional Training, the Secretariat for Families, Children, and the Handicapped, and the Ministry of National Education, specifically its Department of Non-Formal Education, which tries to provide remedial education and job training to child maids and "apprentice artisans." Prosecution of individuals charged with trafficking or violation of labor laws falls to the MOJ.

Over the past five years, the GOM has drawn closer to Spain and the EU in the common fight against migrant smuggling and trafficking in persons. Morocco engages in bilateral efforts with Spain, such as joint naval patrols begun in mid-February 2004. Morocco has continued to work closely with other governments as well. It is a member of working groups on immigration with both the EU and its fellow Maghreb countries. Internationally, the government participates actively in U.N.-sponsored activities relating to trafficking. In July 2007, Morocco hosted the first European-African Ministerial Conference on Migration. The conference hosted ministers from 44 countries and over a dozen international organizations and developed a unified Mission Statement and Plan of Action for the region.

--H. In 2003, the GOM completed its national action plan to combat trafficking in persons. The following were and continue to be involved in developing anti-trafficking policies and programs: MFA Delegated Ministry in charge of Moroccans Living Abroad, Office of the Chief of Migration and Immigration Affairs, Office of the Prime Minister, Office of the Director of International Cooperation, Ministry of Interior, Chief of Immigration, Ministry of Interior.

#### 19. (U) Investigation and Prosecution of Traffickers

--A. On November 20, 2003, Morocco's new Immigration and Emigration Act 02-03, entitled "Entry and Stay of Foreigners in the Kingdom of Morocco, Illegal Emigration and Immigration," was published in the Official Bulletin. Under Title II, Articles 50-56, the law prohibits trafficking in persons and sets specific punishments. It severely punishes people involved in migrant smuggling and human trafficking, including public officials who take a hear-no-evil and see-no-evil approach to violations of

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Moroccan immigration law. Title II makes it abundantly clear that all individuals and their accomplices involved in human trafficking face high fines and prison sentences. Asset forfeiture is also established, and the courts are given extra-territorial judicial powers to rule on violations of Moroccan law, which take place outside Morocco. For the first time, Moroccan immigration law holds public officials accountable. The act criminalizes acts not only carried out by the operatives, but also by those who provide safe haven to smuggled persons and punishes security officers who fail to carry out their duties. The law is especially harsh on public officials who are caught promoting illegal emigration and/or migration.

Article 50 stipulates a fine of 3,000 to 10,000 dirhams (ten dirhams equals roughly one USD) and/or one to six months imprisonment, aside from any punishments under the Penal Code, be assessed against any person attempting to enter and/or exit Moroccan territory by land, sea, or air



by presenting a fraudulent travel document(s) or by traveling under an assumed name or by using falsified documents. It also prohibits attempted entry/departure from points other than recognized border crossings and designated points of departure.

Article 51 provides that a prison sentence of two to five years and a fine of 50,000 to 500,000 dirhams be levied against any public official (whether in charge of or a member of the "public forces"), travel agent, or transportation personnel operating carriers by land, water, and/or air who attempts to facilitate the illegal entry or exit of a person.

Article 52 dictates a prison sentence of six months to three years and a fine of 50,000 to 500,000 dirhams shall be assessed against anyone found to have facilitated, organized, or participated in the illegal entry or exit of Moroccans and/or foreign nationals in a manner detailed in Articles 50-51 and whether or not payment was made for his/her services.

Article 52 also specifies increased penalties of 10 to 15 years in prison and a fine of 500,000 to 1,000,000 dirhams be levied against individuals who are repeat offenders and are discovered to have been habitually involved in human smuggling.

Penalties of 10 to 15 years imprisonment and fines of 500,000 to 1,000,000 dirhams are to be assessed against individual members of any association or cartel created for the express purpose of migrant smuggling. Leaders of these

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associations are also subject to the penalties prescribed in Article 294, Paragraph 2, of the Penal Code.

Moreover, Article 52 inflicts even greater punishments of 15 to 20 years in prison should the would-be emigrant or immigrant suffer serious injury and "permanent incapacity" is the result. If the migrant is killed while being transported, the trafficker is subject to life imprisonment.

Should convictions be handed down, Article 53 grants the courts the right to confiscate the means of transport, whether public, private, or rental, used to commit violations of the law. Transportation assets of trafficking ring members and their accomplices may also be seized, whether or not they participated in the operation.

Article 54 orders that a fine of 10,000 to 1,000,000 dirhams be assessed against any corporate entity found guilty of immigration infractions as specified above. Corporate entities are also subject to confiscation orders.

Article 55 requires that judgments be made public in three daily newspapers, which cover the jurisdiction where the case was heard.

Finally, Article 56 establishes that the Moroccan courts may hear cases brought against foreigners accused of violating Moroccan immigration law. The courts are given extra-territorial jurisdiction in Article 56, which says they may rule on infractions of Moroccan law, which occur outside Morocco's borders and are committed by non-Moroccans.

--B. Penalties under articles 497-504 and 540-549 for traffickers deceiving, defrauding, or coercing individuals are from six months to five years' imprisonment and fines of 200 dirhams (USD 23) to 5000 dirhams (USD 590), depending upon whether minors have been corrupted.

--C. Morocco does not have a law specifically forbidding

labor trafficking. Moroccan law, however, does forbid clandestine labor. The offense carries a fine of between 2000-5000 dirhams (USD 230-590). In the case of employing children under 15 years of age, the fine is increased to 25,000-30,000 dirhams (USD 2960-3555). The Moroccan penal code imposes a fine of 5000-20,000 dirhams (USD 590-2370), and between one and three years prison sentence for anyone convicted of facilitating or encouraging forced child labor. Forced labor is defined by the penal code as any illegal work or any work harmful to a child's health,

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security or morals. Post does not have statistics for forced labor prosecutions in Morocco.

--D. The penalty for rape or forcible sexual assault is dependent upon the involvement of minors and whether the act was deemed violent. Rape offenders can be imprisoned for 5-10 years (article 486). Sexual offenses against minors, not involving violence (i.e., intercourse not deemed rape), are punishable by five to ten years' imprisonment (article 484). Perpetrators of similar acts with violence (rape) face 10-20 years in prison (article 485); if this results in victim's loss of virginity, the offender faces 20-30 years' in jail (article 488). Actual sentences handed down may be less or more severe depending on whether it is a first offense or attenuating circumstances existed.

--E. While prostitution and solicitation of prostitutes is illegal, local law enforcement often casts a blind eye to the problem. Prostitution is commonplace in large cities like Casablanca, Marrakech, Fez, and Agadir, but also poses a problem in smaller cities and in rural areas as well. The government has prosecuted cases against individuals who coerced or forced women into performing sexual services.

--F. According to MOI reports, the government claims to have broken up more than 350 trafficking/smuggling rings in 2006. Of the rings dismantled, 51 cases involving 156 persons were prosecuted for participating, financing or facilitating illegal entry into or exit out of Morocco of both Moroccans and foreigners. Of the above mentioned cases, 23 decisions were rendered, 14 are currently under investigation, and another 14 are presently being tried. Sentences handed down on the convictions range from two months to 12 years imprisonment in addition to fines ranging from 2000-500,000 dirhams (USD 230-59,260).

--G. Various types of individuals and groups are behind migrant smuggling and human trafficking in Morocco: organized criminal gangs are responsible for coordinating some of the clandestine migration to Europe, particularly the sub-Saharan transiting Morocco; "intermediaries" who for a fee work as professional placement agents for the parents of potential child brides, child maids, and apprentice artisans trafficked domestically; parents of rural girls who act as their own "brokers" for farming out their children as child brides or maids; and financially motivated criminals who coerce young women into prostitution. Some Moroccan authorities acting independently, such as border officials or local police, may also turn a blind eye, in exchange for money, to facilitate trafficking.

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Most trafficking rings in Morocco are small criminal groups, although the GOM refers to them as "trafficking mafias." Many of the 350 trafficking rings discovered in 2006 were freelancers or rings working with a handful of people. While the majority of traffickers apprehended were Moroccan, new international networks are appearing with more frequency. In September, authorities arrested a



trafficker with connections to Libya. He confessed to flying illegal Moroccan immigrants to the Libyan desert and then abandoning them before calling local authorities. In November, the Association of Families of Victims of Clandestine Immigrants, an active and respected Moroccan NGO, claimed that since the GOM has cracked down on illegal migration along the Mediterranean and Atlantic coasts, Moroccans are increasingly attempting to migrate to Europe across North Africa and into Italy. The group also asserted that Libyan authorities are capturing, jailing, torturing, and sentencing Moroccan migrants to forced labor.

In tourist towns, there are unofficial reports that hotel personnel arrange to transport girls and young women from rural areas to cities to work as prostitutes. Additionally, there is anecdotal evidence that bartenders and taxi drivers act as "pimps" and arrange to bring the rural women to the larger tourist cities and arrange work for them. There is no evidence that GOM officials are involved in any way.

In addition, the MOI voiced concern this year that there may be growing connections between international terrorist groups, organized crime, money laundering rings, and human trafficking networks in Morocco.

--H. Security forces are actively engaged in investigating, pursuing, and dismantling human trafficking and smuggling rings. The government claims more than 350 rings were discovered and disbanded in 2006. While the majority of these operations concerned only migrant smuggling, the GOM learned during these investigations that some expeditors had pressured sub-Saharan African women to prostitute themselves in order to receive food and shelter while others were involved in false job recruitment schemes in Spain, Italy, Cyprus, the Gulf States, and Saudi Arabia.

--I. Law enforcement officers often participate in training and seminars that cover trafficking when these programs are offered by other countries. Training has been given by the France, Germany, Spain, and Saudi Arabia, according to MOI officials. This year, UNHCR agreed to work with the GOM to train law enforcement officials on the

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internationally accepted manner of dealing with potential refugees and asylum seekers. The project will be multi-phased with the second phase of the training to include a module on identifying trafficked persons.

--J. Morocco is party to several bilateral and multilateral conventions on judicial cooperation and extradition of criminals with European, Arab, Asian, and African countries, as well as the United States. Last year, according to the MOJ, Morocco worked closely with Italian authorities concerning illegal migration of Moroccan minors to Italy. The investigation resulted in information that assisted in the dismantling of criminal networks that specialized in illegal migration of children and their exploitation as "mules" for drug traffickers. Statistics on the number of international investigations are not currently available.

--K. The GOM has not extradited individuals charged with trafficking, although government officials note that Morocco does have bilateral extradition treaties with relevant countries. Morocco does not extradite its nationals in accordance with Article 721 of the Penal Code.

--L. There is no evidence of national government involvement or tolerance for trafficking. On a local level however, there are rumors that public servants acting on their own seek pay-offs or bribes to look the other way in some cases of migrant smuggling. The government is attempting to crack down on corruption within the public

sector. In order to conform to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption which Morocco signed in December 2003, the GOM announced a new project aimed at creating an independent body to fight corruption.

--M. The GOM prosecutes to the full extent of the law its own officials, as it does other individuals, involved in trafficking. In 2006, a judicial police officer, in the northern Moroccan town of Nador, was arrested and prosecuted for corruption and involvement in a local organized criminal activity facilitating illegal migration of Moroccans to Spain. He received a four year prison sentence. In the same region two other policemen were convicted and sentenced to 2 months suspended sentence and fines for forging administrative documents and encouraging illegal migration. There is currently an ongoing investigation of two police officers in Casablanca charged with organizing a criminal gang to facilitate the illegal entry of foreigners into Morocco and assist in their exit from the country.

--N. Revisions to the Penal Code enacted in December 2003

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provide for extraterritorial coverage in cases of child sexual abuse and child sex tourism. According to Minister of Justice Mohamed Bouzoubaa, the number of sexual perversion and pedophilia cases between foreigners and Moroccan minors rose 26 percent in 2006. Of the nationalities involved the MOJ cited, Spanish, German, Dutch, French, Belgian, Tunisian, Swiss and other nationalities. The sentences of those convicted in 2006 ranged from two months to three years imprisonment. Specific numbers of arrests and convictions were not available.

--O. Morocco is a signatory to ILO Conventions 138 (adopted March 19, 1999; ratified January 6, 2000) and 182 (adopted November 24, 2000; ratified January 26, 2001). These two ILO Conventions were published in the Official Bulletin on December 4, 2003. They went into immediate effect. Morocco has adopted the UN International Convention on the Rights of the Child (ratified June 21, 1993). Morocco signed the Sale of Children Protocol supplementing the Rights of the Child Convention in September 2000. Moroccan law has been amended to comply with the UN Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. The Penal Code was revised in December 2003 to incorporate these changes. Morocco is a signatory to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, supplementing the U.N. Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Morocco is a party (since May 1959) to the Geneva Conventions against slavery, ILO Conventions 29 and 105 (ratified May 1957 and December 1966 respectively) against forced labor, and the 1949 UN Convention against trafficking in persons (ratified August 1973). In June 2003, Morocco ratified the International Convention on the Rights of Migrants and Their Families.

110. (U) Protection and assistance to victims.

--A. Morocco's Center for Migrant Rights provides counseling services, including an explanation of one's legal and civil rights, to migrants; however, legal representation is not offered, nor is shelter, medical or psychological services. The GOM relies on the NGO community to provide most services to victims of trafficking.

Child maids who have fled abusive employers or women forced into prostitution that have fled the abusive situation, have been assisted by Moroccan authorities, specifically, the Secretary of State for Family, Solidarity, and Social Action. The former Ministry of Women's and Children's Affairs developed a national strategy to combat violence against women which includes training for social workers to

deal with women and girls who are victims of violence. Victims of child labor and forced prostitution are often aided by local NGOs active in combating those problems.

--B. The GOM provides modest funds to national NGO's offering shelter and services to victims of trafficking. In addition, it offers teachers and social workers to support national NGOs working with child maids. At the Ministry of Labor, it provides offices to the International Labor Organization (ILO)'s International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC), which is working on the child maid problem. The GOM allows authorized NGO's to solicit tax-free donations from citizens, residents, and companies, indirectly assisting these non-profit elements of civil society to provide services to trafficking victims.

--C. Those potential victims of trafficking who are detained, jailed, or deported, are usually third country nationals transiting Morocco en route to Europe. Thesedetainees are prosecuted for violation of immigration laws or deported. The harsh international reaction to a December police roundup of illegal migrants, and UNHCR recognized refugees and asylum seekers prompted the GOM to accept the UNHCR offer of training of law enforcement individuals in the handling and identification of recognized refugees. Morocco is a signatory of the Convention for Protection of Immigrants and Their Families.

In 2003 Parliament changed the Penal Code so that runaway child maids may be administratively returned to their families instead of being arrested for vagrancy. If returning them to their parents is not possible or feasible, they should be placed in separate youth centers, not mixed in with juvenile delinquents.

--D. Morocco's November 2003 Immigration and Emigration Act carefully defines the rights of illegal immigrants, economic migrants, and asylum seekers in Title II, Article 138. This article also pinpoints the prerogatives immigration officials have in protecting Morocco's borders. The statute (and the way the law is implemented) blurs the distinction between trafficked persons and economic migrants. It sets forth limits to how long a non-Moroccan may be detained and under what conditions. The law furthermore lists the rights which an intending immigrant, non-resident alien, casual visitor, or trafficked person is entitled. In the past year, however, there have been reports by NGOs, such as MSF, IOM, and other organizations, that human rights of the non-Moroccan migrants were violated when Moroccan police transported numerous sub-Saharan illegal economic migrants, mixed with refugees, to

the Algerian border and left them in the desert with little or no food or water. UNHCR reported claims that some of the sub-Saharans taken in the raid were abused and had their documents stolen or destroyed.

--E. While victims are not encouraged to file civil suits against traffickers, they often testify on behalf of the GOM when it seeks to prosecute trafficking cases.

--F. We are unaware of any specific protections, other than laws forbidding the various forms of trafficking, that the government provides to victims of trafficking or witnesses in cases against traffickers.

--G. Morocco offers some specialized training for government officials in how to deal with victims of trafficking. The government trained diplomats in countries that are prime destination or transit countries, i.e.,

Spain and Italy, for Moroccan victims of trafficking.

--H. Morocco is working with NGOs and the international community, specifically Spain, Italy and the IOM, to establish shelters and a system to assist minors who have been the victims of trafficking.

--I. The most outspoken organization dedicated to the eradication of trafficking and migrant smuggling is the "Friends and Families of Clandestine Immigration Victims," headed by Khalil Jemmah. In addition, several local NGOs focus on women's and children's issues and directly or indirectly work to mitigate the incidence and abuse of child brides, child maids and women forced into sexual services. The work of these NGOs includes publicizing and monitoring the child maid problem; providing remedial education, vocational training, health care, and recreational opportunities to child maids; rehabilitating and educating street children, delinquents and runaways; assisting single mothers to become financially independent; educating youth and prostitutes (male and female) about the dangers of unprotected sex; and advocating women's and children's rights.

--I. The following (alphabetical) list outlines those Moroccan NGOs best known for dealing with populations that include possible victims of trafficking. Most of these organizations receive support and/or cooperation from the Moroccan government, in particular the Secretariat for Family, Solidarity, and Social Action:

Association Bayti  
Dr. Najat M'jid  
Km. 12.5, Ancienne route de Rabat

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Sidi Bernoussi, Casablanca  
Tel: (212) 22-75-69-65/66  
Bayti focuses its work on street children, rehabilitating and educating runaways, child prostitutes, and indigents.

Centre Lalla Meriam  
Mrs. Benaich  
2, Rue Souktani  
Rabat  
Tel: (212) 37-20-13-93 and (212) 37-73-03-02  
This center works with single mothers, many of them child maids, and abandoned babies.

Ikram  
Mrs. Bennani  
Tel: (212) 22-36-60-98  
Ikram runs a program for young women in the 15-16 year old range to train them to become "certified" domestic servants and child-care workers.

La Ligue Marocaine de la Protection de l'Enfance (LMPE)  
Mrs. Fatima Hassar, Presidente centrale  
Ave Akrach/Rue Mellouza, Nahda II,  
Quartier Haut Souissi, Rabat  
Rabat  
Tel: (212) 37-75-03-10  
LMPE (the Moroccan League for the Protection of Infancy or the Children's Protection League) was founded in 1957 with a focus on helping abandoned or other vulnerable children. It conducted the first study of child maids in Morocco, released in November 1995. LMPE operates day care centers, emergency medical centers, literacy training and clubs for poor children and their families. It is also one of the NGOs participating in the child maids project in Casablanca.

Institut Natl. de Solidarite avec les Femmes en D?tresse  
(INSAF)  
Mrs. Meriem Othmani, President  
20 bis, rue de Peronne

Casablanca

Tel: (212) 22-40-12-22

INSAF (National Institute for Solidarity with Women in Distress), established November 1999, is the successor to a local affiliate of Swiss-based Terre des Hommes. It assists single mothers by providing a shelter and several "halfway homes" (apartments) in Casablanca. It also helps them become more independent through education and training, while caring for their infants and children in day care centers. It will be expanding its activities to target child maids specifically for sex education, as this population constitutes a significant number of rape victims

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and unwed mothers.

Observatoire Nationale des Droits de l'Enfant (ONDE)

Dr. El Malki Tazi, President

B.P. 511, Rabat Chellah

Rabat

Tel. (212) 37-75-50-99, fax 37-75-53-43

ONDE (the National Observatory for Children's Rights) operates a child abuse hotline (24/7), has organized children's rights publicity campaigns with support from UNICEF, and has a "one village-one well" campaign to reduce the labor burden on children and families of fetching water.

Solidarite Feminine

Mrs. Aicha Echanna

10, Rue Mingard

Palmier, Casablanca

Tel: (212) 22-25-46-46

This large NGO is an advocate of women's rights, but its director has worked on rehabilitating prostitutes and spearheaded an effort to publicize the plight of child maids.

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TIP Hero  
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11. (U) Post would like to nominate Secretary of State for Families, Children, and the Handicapped, Yasmina Baddou, as Morocco's Anti-Trafficking Hero. Baddou has been and continues to be an indefatigable advocate for children's rights. Her fight to rescue child laborers and child maids in particular in Morocco helped bring the once taboo subject to light. Baddou spearheaded Morocco's new Plan of Action to fight child labor and insure that all of the country's children are afforded the opportunity to have a safe and healthy childhood, attend school, and be protected against forced labor. The Plan of Action, launched this year, began with an awareness campaign to sensitize the general population of the dangers of this once widely accepted practice of employing child maids. Other parts of the program include the development of child protection and rescue units throughout the country, and emergency action teams to assist street children at risk. Baddou has managed to insure commitments to the Plan of Action from numerous ministries and secretariats, in addition to NGOs and various civil society members.

12. (U) Sources for this report include officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Justice. Other

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sources included NGOs, international organizations and other child welfare advocates; researchers; Ministry of Justice publications; press reports; and prior reporting.

13. (U) Mission POC on TIP issues is Amy M. Wilson, Labor/Political Officer, ConGen Casablanca, tel. 212-22-26-

45-50, ext. 4151; fax 212-22-20-80-96; mail: PSC 74, Box 24, APO, AE 09718; pouch: 6280 Casablanca Place, Washington, DC 20521-6280; e-mail: WilsonAM(at symbol)state.gov.

114. Embassy Rabat cleared this message.

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